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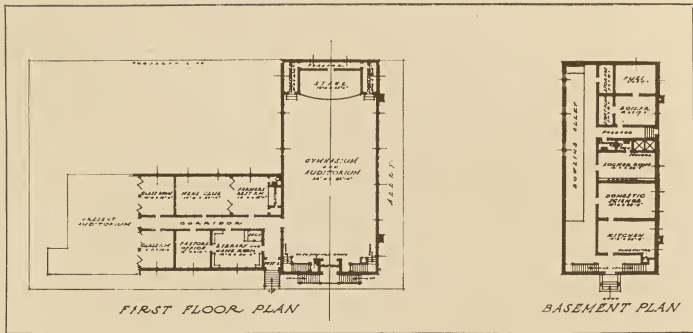
Texas Home Missions,

Larger Parish and Demonstration Parish Plans

By

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INTERIOR OF COMMUNITY CHURCH, COLLEBRAN, COLO.
 Designed by Rural Work Department, C. H. M. S.

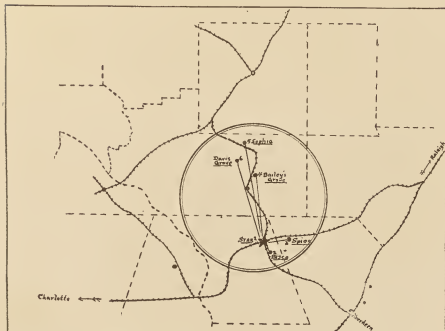
LARGER PARISH AND DEMONSTRATION PARISH PLANS



THIS article will visualize by means of the accompanying illustrations the larger parish and demonstration parish plans which are being promoted by the rural work department of the Congregational Extension Societies. Work as projected and work which is already being carried out in three different types of communities is described together with the larger vision which inspires it. What is being done in these places by militant home missionary leaders backed by people ready and willing to render a maximum service in taking possession of the open country can be done elsewhere. Missionary workers who thus "attempt great things for God" and rural Congregationalism are certain to be marked out for a new and large leadership.

THE LARGER PARISH

The Larger Parish plan is one by which village churches alive to their larger duty and privilege are multiplying themselves throughout the countryside. Out-stations are established, and a regular circuit is maintained. These may be Sunday Schools, preaching appointments, or little churches regularly organized and meeting in their own buildings.



THE LARGER PARISH, STAR, NORTH CAROLINA.

Place—Star, N. C. A village of 300 inhabitants.

Workers—Minister, Rev. Robert L. Sheaff; Extension Associate, Rev. Parker W. Fisher; Home Visitor, Miss Matilda K. Orr.

Center—Country Life School (\$40,000).

Outstations—Four Congregational churches and buildings, schools.

Extension Equipment—Parish Car; electric generator; moving picture machine; baby organ.

People—American; mostly white; illiterate; very poor.

Occupation—Small farming.

Country—Unsurveyed; undeveloped; poor soil.

Problem—Grade and high school; industrial education of backward children; better type of religion; home visitation. Typically Southern.

Membership in the smaller churches frequently carries with it a membership in the larger village church. Ministering to this Larger Parish does not end with Sunday but includes week day pastoral visitation and a part taken in every activity which is of interest to the people of the open country. The field demands the services of more than one pastor and in-

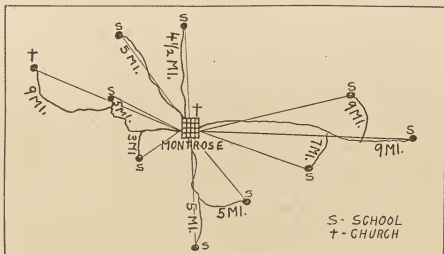


LARGER PARISH CAR, STAR, N. C.

cludes an automobile equipment specially designed for a comprehensive social and religious work.

The Larger Parish plan is not a new one, but is certain to be increasingly used in a coming era of fewer and better churches. Just as the consolidated school is securing for country youth a better educational equipment and more

efficient teaching, so this larger ministry of "the church at the center" provides a more adequate religious privilege. The old circuit rider system which is now seldom used is



LARGER PARISH, MONTROSE, COLORADO

Place—Montrose, Colorado. Town of 3,400 inhabitants.

Workers—Minister, Rev. Isaac M. Cassell; Extension Associate; Physical and Social Director, Raymond Lewis.

Center—Community church (\$60,000).

Outstations—Seven schoolhouses (one church organization).

Extension Equipment—Parish Car; electric generator; moving picture machine.

People—American; well-educated; prosperous.

Occupation—Agriculture.

Country—Irrigated, fertile farm lands.

Problem—Religious and social extension work to win interest and bring outlying peoples to church.

replaced by a more thorough extension work. The serving of a large area outside the village does away with wrong distinctions and rivalries between it and the open country



SERVICE CAR, MONTROSE, COLO.

and welds both together into one large and thoroughly Christian community.

THE DEMONSTRATION PARISH PLAN

The Demonstration Parish plan was suggested by "the demonstration farm" method used by the United States Government. Certain promising fields are selected and cultivated under instructions from the Washington Bureau and serve as a model to farmers in that neighborhood. In like

manner the Home Missionary Society chooses promising churches and parishes for purposes of religious demonstration. This is done on invitation of the people and under



COMMUNITY CHURCH

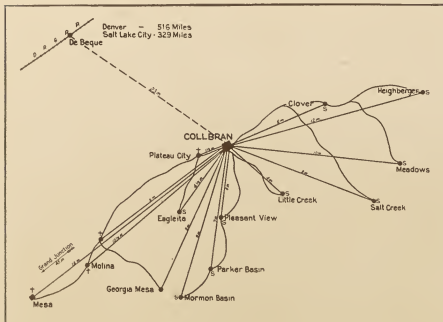
formal agreement which imposes certain definite obligations upon both parties. The demonstration is for a period of years, and the parishes selected are made "specials," being cared for in a manner different from the ordinary missionary

procedure. After a thorough investigation has been made of the fields and the workers to be placed over them, the societies co-operate to an unusual degree in securing an ideal



W.H. COLLBRAN, COLO.

equipment, adequate personnel, and ample support. The aim is to demonstrate what a church furnished with everything required for a complete ministry can really accomplish in a community. It is expected that other communities will



DEMONSTRATION PARISH, COLLBRAN, COLORADO.

Place—Collbran, Colorado, village of 300 inhabitants; Plateau Valley, twenty miles by six miles, 4,000 people.

Workers—Minister, Rev. James F. Walker; Extension Associate, Rev. L. M. Isaacs.

Center—Church and Community House.

Outstations—Fourteen schoolhouses and churches.

Equipment—Parish Car; electric generator; moving picture machine.

People—Mostly American (85 per cent); well-educated; very prosperous.

Occupation—Stock growing; agriculture.

Country—Irrigated; fertile.

Problem—By an intensive and extensive religio-social problem to make conquest of the entire Plateau Valley.

be inspired and influenced by these "model parishes" to make of themselves demonstration centers. The Demonstration Parish also offers an inducement to young men to enter the rural ministry and presents a goal of effort to those already there. It will cause rural ministers to stay by their ministry with an expectation that faithful work will ensure their



PARISH CAR AND PASTOR, COLLEBRAN, COLO.

ultimate selection to the leadership of these peoples and parishes which are examples for the whole religious world.

Both of the above plans are generally used only where one church has an undivided possession of the field. Their use here, however, is itself a demonstration of the fact that people of different faiths can and will unite in religious work

and worship. These parishes are prophecy of a day when such plans will be an interdenominational method of forever doing away with the useless and sinful multiplication of churches in rural communities. They also indicate the duty and responsibility of all rural centers to minister in like manner to outlying and yet unevangelized territory.

THE LARGER VISION

The Larger Parish and Demonstration Parish plans are inspired by a new and larger vision.

“Community” no longer means the territory contained within the limits of any town or village. The community extends out in every direction into the open country and includes all of the homes whose interests actually center there. It is not measured by a team haul but consists of the “family of folks” living within the radius of an automobile drive.

A church is something more than a preaching point; it has become a social center. And just because it cannot exist apart from the life of the community it is a community church. This does not mean that the church is taking over and supervising all of the social work of the world. On the contrary it is spiritualizing the necessary and life-giving activities of men by teaching them to engage in the ordinary and legitimate work of life with a sublime consciousness that it is itself a part in the work of the Kingdom.

The mission of the church is, above all things, to *serve*—

to serve *all the people*, serve *all their interests*, and serve *all the time*. It exists to save souls; its purpose is to save men themselves and *man*. As a force rather than a field the real worth of the church appears in Christian sentiment, in the upward trend of community affairs, and in the actual results of its work in the lives of men. The right of the church to be supported rests not upon what it is but upon what it does, upon its ability to give value for value and make itself actually necessary to the community.

The minister is pre-eminently a man of God, but he is also an organizer, a community builder, and a social engineer. Although not often a farmer, he is, however, rural minded and able "to know the ideas, understand the ideals, and see visions of a new ruralism." He preaches Christ and His gospel in terms of farmer life and leads his church out into a genuine program of rural and social service.

A plan for parish work is based upon "the long term policy" and a comprehensive survey of the community, and is wrought out upon the particular field where it is to be used and for that field alone. Such a plan is definite and constructive, and is thought through. It has an aim, posits a goal, and is thoroughly workable by those who must execute it. The church that uses the plan dares to ask great things from God, from itself, and from the people, in the assurance that it is working for the biggest and best things of life.

Ministerial effectiveness is not an idle gift of "the cloth." It comes to the rural pastor as a man among men and is won

by sheer force of an inherent manhood and "love for folks" which enables him actually to prove up as first citizen of the community. Such a man will not use the country pastorate as merely "a stepping stone to something better" but will love it for itself alone and as a sublime way of spending a human life.

THE COMMUNITY CHURCH

The Community Church is often confused with the so-called "Institutional Church" and people living in the country look upon it as merely one more of those ideal organizations which fate has decreed should exist only in cities. As a matter of fact the rural church above all others should be a community church. The very name is suggestive of an ideal of service rather than a particular or impossible set of methods. Its prime motive is the upbuilding of the community. The church of the past was largely preoccupied with the problem of individual salvation. The community church would save the community as well. It is vitally concerned about that life which all men have in common and of which the individual is a part. The average church spends most of its energies in maintaining its own existence. The community church gives up life in order to find it. It uses every legitimate method throughout seven days of the week to reach and minister to people living within as large an area as possible. Such a community of folk is to be made into a veritable Kingdom of God.

A Larger Parish Community Program

(x—Already Started. o—Ready to Start.)

Religious

- x Morning Service
- x Evening Community Service
- x Enlarged Church School
- x Motor Transport Corps
- x Home Department
- x Mission Study in S. S.
- x Parish work in "no man's land"
- Young People's Society

Economic

- o Farm co-operation
- o Canning Clubs
- o Community Kitchen

Educational

- x Nature Study Club
- o Sewing School
- x Home Economics classes
- Singing School
- Lecture Courses
- Enlarged Village Library

Recreational

- x Moving Pictures
- Sports
- x Baseball
- o Volleyball
- o Tennis

- o Game Room
- Dramatics
- o Community Socials and Picnics

Industrial

- x Home Shops

Public Health

- Village water supply
- x Home Nursing Courses
- x Health Lectures
- o Hot School Lunches

Young People's Work

- x Boy Scouts
- o Junior Scouts
- Girl's Clubs

Village Improvement

- x Care of Village Common
- Care Cemetery
- Care door yards

Miscellaneous

- Rest room and lavatory
- x Community Christmas tree
- x Memorial Day
- Old Home Week

THE CONGREGATIONAL HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY

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